CHICAGO'S PUBLIC HOUSING today

Monthly Report Chicago Housing Authority
Issued April 15, 1954

608 South Dearborn Street Chicago 5, Illinois

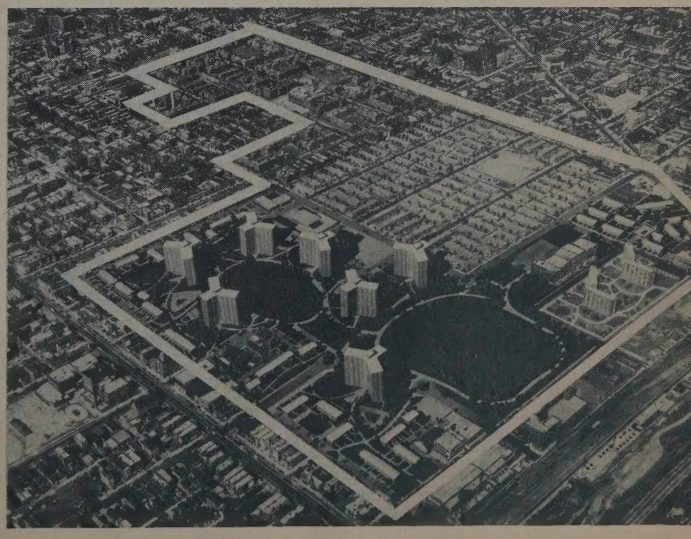
OPEN HOUSE AT GOVERNOR LOWDEN HOMES DRAWS 2,000 ATTENDANCE -- FLOOD OF APPLICATIONS LARGEST SINCE 1950 --

Left, . . Residents of Princeton Park, neighboring private housing development, served refreshments in the community building. Right . . . Pullman Branch of the Chicago Public Library got into the spirit of the Demonstration Apartment with its "Do-It-Yourself" display.

Open house at Governor Frank O. Lowden Homes on April 4, held primarily to give neighbors a look at the new CHA project at 95th Street and Wentworth Avenue, drew an unexpectedly large attendance of nearly 2,000 people from the entire South Side as well as other parts of the city. Most of the visitors came not just to see the new housing development, but to apply for apartments. As a result, new applications for housing received by CHA on that day and in the week following mounted to an all-time high since mass registrations were held in 1950.

More than 1,000 applications were taken at the open house. On the Monday following, 400 applicants came to the CHA Downtown Rental Office to register their need for housing. To accommodate the people who could not attend the open house, the Authority kept the display apartment at (cont'd on p. 3)

CEREMONIES DEDICATING GRACE ABBOTT HOMES scheduled for May 10 will mark SEVENTEEN YEARS OF SLUM CLEARANCE activity on the Near West Side by the Chicago Housing Authority. Charles E. Slusser, Commissioner of the Public Housing Administration, will take part in the ceremonies. Governor William H. Stratton, Mayor Martin H. Kennelly, Illinois senators and congressmen, and local officials are also being invited to participate. The program will be preceded and followed by an open house for officials, all Near West side neighbors, and other visitors. Grace Abbott Homes will add 1,218 modern homes for Chicago's low-income families. Three apartment buildings and 48 rowhouse homes are now partially occupied and ground has been broken for an additional three elevator buildings and 20 rowhouse units. The new project is just south of Jane Addams Houses, first of the city's public housing, completed in 1938; and right next door to Robert H. Brooks Homes, completed in 1943, and Loomis Courts, opened in 1952. Ceremonies are scheduled for 3:30 p.m. and the open house from 2:30 to 5:00 p.m.



John R. Fugard, Chairman John L. Yancey, Treasurer Samuel N. Katzin Joseph P. Sullivan Elizabeth Wood, Executive Secretary

CHICAGO HOUSING CHIEFS CONFER WITH COLE

Chicago is well equipped to take full advantage of any federal assistance offered by legislation now pending in Congress to obtain for the city a balanced housing program. This was the gist of the message brought by chiefs of Chicago's housing agencies when they met in Washington on April 5 with HHFA's Albert M. Cole, PHA's Commissioner Charles, E. Slusser, and other federal housing officials.

The meeting was an outgrowth of interest in Chicago's various housing programs expressed when federal officials visited the city and examined plans for such new redevelopments as the New Rockwell Neighborhood and others. Each of the city's agencies presented a picture of the current status of its program, and there was brief discussion of the pending housing legislation. Section 221, which deals with federal insurance of mortgages for construction of private-enterprise low-rent housing for displaced families, is completely unworkable in Chicago because of cost limitations, according to the Chicago group, and it was strongly urged that this section be amended to substitute realistic cost figures.

The Chicago delegation was composed of James C. Downs, Jr., Housing and Redevelopment Coordinator; D. E. Mackelmann, Deputy Housing Coordinator; Ira J. Bach, Executive Director of Chicago Land Clearance Commission; Frederick T. Aschman, Executive Director of the Chicago Plan Commission; Richard Smykal, Deputy Building Commissioner; Thomas Bunsa, Executive Director of Chicago Dwellings Association, and Elizabeth Wood, Executive Secretary, Chicago Housing Authority.

NEW INCOME LIMITS IN EFFECT

The Public Housing Administration on March 31 approved the CHA proposal to increase income limits for tenants in federally aided public housing apartments. Following are the new limits for admission and for continued occupancy:

	For Admission*	For Continued Occupancy*
2-person family	$3,100	$3,700
3- or 4-person family	3,300	4,000
5-or-more-person family	3,500	4,200

*PLUS $100 for each minor child in family

The "Do-It-Yourself Teams

Top. . . Days before the Open House, residents of Trumbull Park Homes and Racine Courts, neighboring CHA developments, as well as Princeton Park Homes collaborated on preparation. Here, Mrs. Ouida Clarke, Princeton Park Homes, is asking Mrs. Betty Jallings, Trumbull Park Homes, how she refinished a chest of drawers for the dining space of the Demonstration Apartment. Mrs. Fred Lasenby, Racine Courts, and Mrs. Ann Chearo, Trumbull Park Homes, look on. Center. . . Mrs. Helen Martin, Princeton Park Homes, hangs the draperies while Mrs. Eugene Galbreth, Racine Courts, and others put slip covers on the couch. . . . . Bottom. . . Mr. C. M. Edwards, Princeton Park Homes management staff, looks and listens with admiration as Mrs. Mattie Samuels and Mrs. Lillie Belle Jones, Racine Courts, explain how slip covers and pillow tops were made for the Open House.

OPEN HOUSE (cont'd from p. 1)

Lowden Homes open from six to eight o'clock in the evening on the following Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Three hundred people came to visit and nine out of ten made application. The three-times-a-week office hours will be retained throughout April until the time of actual leasing when the project rental office will be open full time.

Though Governor Lowden Homes includes only 128 apartments and a majority of these will be rented to families on CHA priority lists, registrations are being accepted from all families in housing need. Those not accommodated at Lowden Homes will be considered for other new projects where CHA will have some 2,500 apartments available at various times this year. Completion of new units will give small families, at least, the best chance in many years of being accommodated in new CHA homes.

The Neighbors Are Hosts

The Lowden Homes open house was a cooperative affair. Neighbors from Princeton Park Homes, private housing development of 900 families to the north of the new CHA development, arranged for the refreshment table and presided over the frappe bowl. They also helped residents of Trumbull Park Homes and Racine Courts -- Lowden "sister" projects -- prepare the apartment on display. The apartment was a demonstration of the "Do-It-Yourself" approach, designed to show how ingenuity and elbow grease, plus handed down furniture that is salvable, can help furnish a home at low cost but in comfortable style.

Other hosts at the open house were the Chicago Board of Health Infant Welfare Station No. 32, which is located in the Lowden Community Building, and the Gillespie School PTA. Exhibits were on hand from the Pullman Branch of the Chicago Public Library, the Chicago Park District, and the two public schools serving the neighborhood -- Gillespie Elementary School and Calumet High School. Mrs. Philip Miller, daughter of the late Illinois Governor Frank O. Lowden, and her family, were among guests who attended the open house.

EXPERIMENTAL BUILDING PROGRAM PROPOSED FOR CITY

A proposal aimed at stimulating new construction by private builders in conservation areas of Chicago where no new building has been undertaken for many years was set before the CHA board on March 23 by Housing and Redevelopment Coordinator James C. Downs, Jr.

The plan calls for the Chicago Dwellings Association, the city's nonprofit housing corporation, to select private builders to construct twelve three-bedroom single-family houses of suitable design for a maximum construction cost of $12,000 each, or a total cost of $144,000 for all twelve. Upon completion, the houses would be sold. Because the Chicago Housing Authority acts as the land acquisition agency for CDA and is legally obligated to approve all CDA expenditures, the plan was submitted for CHA board approval.

Sites for the twelve experimental houses are all located in such areas as Hyde Park, West Kenwood, Englewood and Laketown, an area east of the stock yards, but it is Coordinator Downs' belief that there are hundreds of similar vacant lots in Chicago's older neighborhoods which are not being used for new building.

"Private builders have steered clear of such sites because they don't like to build on isolated lots and are not certain of the market possibilities of selling new homes built in old neighborhoods. We hope to show them that building in these areas could be a profitable business," said Downs. He also expressed the belief that new building in older areas would encourage owners of existing property to make repairs and eliminate the fear that such repairs are useless because the whole neighborhood is deteriorating.

The proposal received approval in principle by the CHA board, but a definite go-ahead signal was held up pending study of legal questions involved.

HAROLD L. ICKES HOMES OPEN FOR TENANTS

Moving vans were clogging the streets on Thursday, April 1, when six families moved into newly opened Harold L. Ickes Homes at 22d and State Streets. A second building will open later in April and two additional buildings in the first stage of construction on this project will open at thirty-day intervals, adding 332 new homes to this Near South Side community.

Already under way is the second stage of construction on the project which will add an additional 471 homes. Completion is expected by the spring of 1955. The entire project was designed by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill.

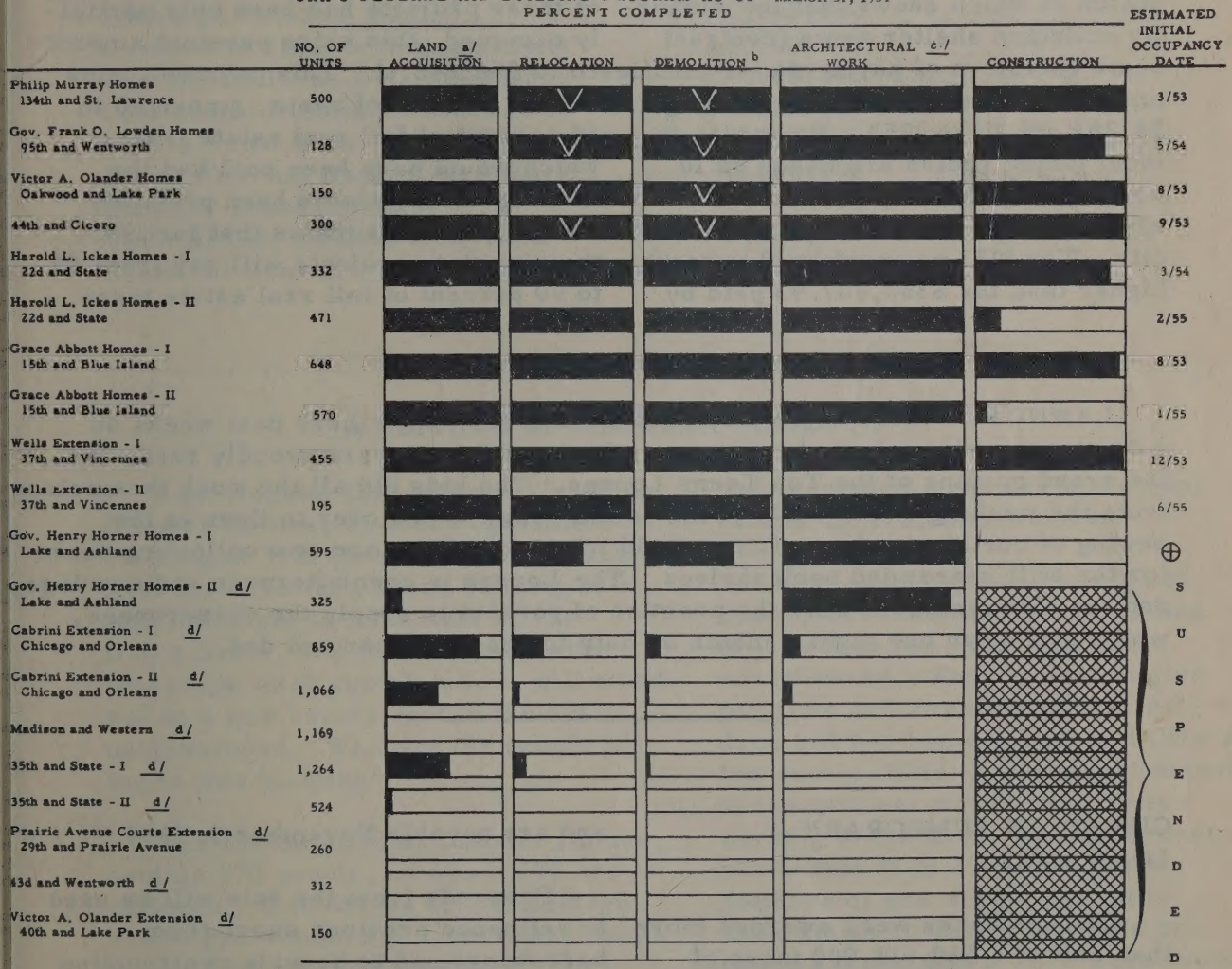
Among the first tenants to move in were the families of Celzo Esquivel and I. W. Maybin, who were assigned dwellings of adequate size for their families at rents graded to fit their incomes.

The Esquivels moved into a five-bedroom apartment in the new project for which they will pay $47 a month. Esquivel is a machine operator who

had been living with his wife and their six children -- ranging in age from 3 to 12 -- in a two-room furnished apartment on the Near North Side.

The Maybins were assigned a three-bedroom apartment at $64 a month. This family has four children from 2 to 7 years of age and moved from one of the CHA Veterans Temporary projects on the South Side which is now being taken out of service. Maybin, who served with the Army in World War II, is employed as a cook.

CHA'S FEDERAL-AID BUILDING PROGRAM AS OF MARCH 31, 1954


PERCENT COMPLETED
NO. OF UNITS
LAND a/ ACQUISITION
RELOCATION
DEMOLITION b
ARCHITECTURAL c/ WORK
CONSTRUCTION
ESTIMATED INITIAL OCCUPANCY DATE
Philip Murray Homes 134th and St. Lawrence 500 3/53
Gov. Frank O. Lowden Homes 95th and Wentworth 128 5/54
Victor A. Olander Homes Oakwood and Lake Park 150 8/53
44th and Cicero 300 9/53
Harold L. Ickes Homes - I 22d and State 332 3/54
Harold L. Ickes Homes - II 22d and State 471 2/55
Grace Abbott Homes - I 15th and Blue Island 648 8/53
Grace Abbott Homes - II 15th and Blue Island 570 1/55
Wells Extension - I 37th and Vincennes 455 12/53
Wells Extension - II 37th and Vincennes 195 6/55
Gov. Henry Horner Homes - I Lake and Ashland 595 ⊕
Gov. Henry Horner Homes - II d/ Lake and Ashland 325 S
Cabrini Extension - I d/ Chicago and Orleans 859 U
Cabrini Extension - II d/ Chicago and Orleans 1,066 S
Madison and Western d/ 1,169 P
35th and State - I d/ 1,264 E
35th and State - II d/ 524 N
Prairie Avenue Courts Extension d/ 29th and Prairie Avenue 260 D
43d and Wentworth d/ 312 E
Victor A. Olander Extension d/ 40th and Lake Park 150 D

a/ Based on number of parcels purchased or optioned.

b/ Percent parcels ordered cleared.

c/ Excluding supervision during construction.

d/ Construction dependent upon Congressional action governing number of "starts" allowed for nation in year beginning July 1, 1954.

V Denotes vacant land ⊕ Starts in 1954 ⊠ Suspended

CHA "TAX" PAYMENTS TO RISE 18 PERCENT

The City of Chicago and other local taxing bodies will receive a minimum of $426,312 from the Chicago Housing Authority later this year for "taxes" or service charges on 23 low-rent housing developments for the calendar year 1953.

This estimate is based on a report from CHA to the County Assessor on March 16 which shows that the Authority collected shelter rents (contract rents exclusive of payments for utilities and miscellaneous charges) totaling $4,263,119.83 in 1953. Payments to local taxing bodies are based on 10 percent of this sum, in accordance with cooperation agreements with the city. The 1953 payment is 18 percent higher than the $360,967.93 paid by CHA for the calendar year 1952. The increase in payments is due largely to the addition of 863 apartments to the rent list.

In addition, the Authority will pay the local government any surplus income resulting from operation of the eight low-rent projects built with city and state funds. For 1952, when many of these projects had been only partially occupied, this extra payment amounted to $54,846.11. This payment, plus the ten percent of rents, amounted to 65 percent of full real estate taxes which would have been paid had the housing developments been privately owned. CHA estimates that for 1953, the city state projects will pay from 80 to 90 percent of full real estate taxes.

LAWNDALE GARDENS TEENAGERS have been busy these past weeks on a do-it-yourself project of their own. On April 2 they were proudly ready for the grand opening of the Top Teens Lounge. The kids did all the work themselves from the washing of the walls in the social room turned over to them to the sewing of curtains and repairing an old juke box. They are now collecting books for the still uncrowded book shelves. The Lounge is open afternoon and evenings and the club members have the promise of parents to supply the chaperonage, which will mean one night a month on duty for each mother and dad.

CHA SELLS TEMPORARY LOAN NOTES

Chicago banks were awarded more than half of a $30,618,000 issue of temporary loan notes sold by the Authority on April 13th. Interest rates, considerably lower than on recent bids, ranged from .72 percent to .79 percent for the notes which are dated May 4, and are payable November 5, 1954.

Proceeds from the sale will be used to refinance previous short-term borrowings and to provide construction funds for eight new projects now being developed by the Authority under the Housing Act of 1949.

Successful bidders were:

		Interest Rate
LaSalle National Bank	$1,250,000	.72
National Boulevard Bank	1,000,000	.73
American National Bank & Trust Co.	1,000,000	.73
South Shore National Bank	500,000	.73
Chicago National Bank	500,000	.73
Continental Illinois National Bank	500,000	.74
City National Bank	1,000,000	.74
Continental Illinois National Bank	500,000	.75
Sears Community State Bank	1,000,000	.75
Lake Shore National Bank	1,000,000	.75
First National Bank	4,000,000	.75
Exchange National Bank	1,000,000	.75
Continental Illinois National Bank	500,000	.76
Continental Illinois National Bank	500,000	.77
Continental Illinois National Bank	500,000	.78
Harris Trust & Savings Bank	1,100,000	.78
Chase National Bank of New York	5,000,000	.78
Bankers Trust Company	400,000	.78
National City Bank of New York	2,000,000	.79
Chemical Bank & Trust Company of NY	7,368,000	.79

A PICTURE OF OLANDER HOMES . . .

Last August, CHA opened Victor A. Olander Homes, 15-story apartment building at 39th Street and Lake Park Avenue. The tall, brick building is a familiar sight to motorists on the Outer Drive, and this summer with landscape work completed, it will stand out as a new beauty spot in the old neighborhood. Who are the people living in this building?

The 150 families at Olander Homes contain 570 people, of whom 299 are children. Two-thirds of the children are of pre-school age. On every floor, there is an indoor play space. Outdoors these children enjoy playgrounds equipped with swings and slides. Laundry is an important factor in families with many small children and the mothers are particularly happy with the well-equipped laundries and drying rooms the project provides.

Wage-earning fathers in 84 of Olander's families report incomes of less than $68, yet none of the wives works. Each is able to give full time and attention to her children and her home because of CHA's low rents. This is in sharp contrast to the national picture which, according to the U. S. Census Bureau, shows that 15 to 20 percent of the mothers of pre-school age children whose husbands' pay was between $38 and $68 a week were working to meet expenses.

Servicemen's Families Housed

Fathers of 13 families at Olander Homes are now in the U. S. Armed

Forces. Net pay for these servicemen ranges from $27 to $53 a week and represents the sole income for the families, all of whom have children. Before moving to Olander Homes, the soldiers' wives had been paying from $24 to $80 a month rent, exclusive of utilities and in some instances even heating costs were extra. They now pay $24 to $47 a month for their low-rent apartments and the rental charge includes utilities and heat. One family whose weekly income is $30 had been paying $80 a month for a slum apartment. At Olander Homes they pay $28 a month.

The families living at Olander Homes are typical of that segment of Chicago's population which is hardest hit by the city's continuing housing shortage. While the Authority is able to rehouse some of Chicago's lowest income families, about two-thirds of those presently living in the slums are ineligible for public housing because their incomes are still above the recently increased income limits. Most of these families will have to remain in slum housing until apartments or homes are put on the market in quantity at much lower rents or sales prices than prevail today.

DORNEY HOMES SITE TO BE SOLD BY CHA

CHA Commissioners have proposed that the four-acre site at 43d Street and Lowe Avenue, which CHA has owned since 1941, be offered for sale and have instructed the Authority staff to prepare a plan for disposition of the property.

Blueprints for the proposed Maurice J. Dorney Homes were ready in 1942 when the federal government decided to shelve plans for redevelopment of the site because of material shortages during World War II.

The Authority had planned a 108-unit low-rent housing development for the site, but the City Council failed to approve the plan when the late Alderman Wagner proposed that the site be rebuilt by private interests. To date, the Authority has invested $117,388 in the property. All but one of the substandard structures on the site have been demolished.

SLUSSER TO ADDRESS NAHRO REGIONAL CONFERENCE

About 300 delegates from all parts of the Middle West will convene at the Congress Hotel on May 10 for the North Central Regional Conference of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. The three-day meeting which will extend through May 12 will be devoted to panel discussions and informal consultations on problems relating to management, urban renewal, rehabilitation and conservation, housing aged families, and accounting procedures.

Featured speaker for the annual dinner, to be held May 10, will be Charles E. Slusser, Commissioner of the Public Housing Administration. On Wednesday, May 12, the group will tour the city for an inspection of urban renewal in action.

Harry J. Schneider, director of management for the Chicago Housing Authority, is chairman of the Conference Planning Committee.

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING BOOMS IN SUBURBS -- LAGS IN CHICAGO

Private building of housing for rent is virtually at a standstill in Chicago, despite the shortage of family-sized rental units in all sections of the city. In 1953, only 2,763 new apartments were built in the city, and almost half -- 1,233 units -- were low-rent dwellings built by the Chicago Housing Authority. An additional 820 new apartments were added to the city's housing supply last year through legal conversions of existing units, but this was more than outweighed by the loss of 1,173 Chicago dwellings through demolition.

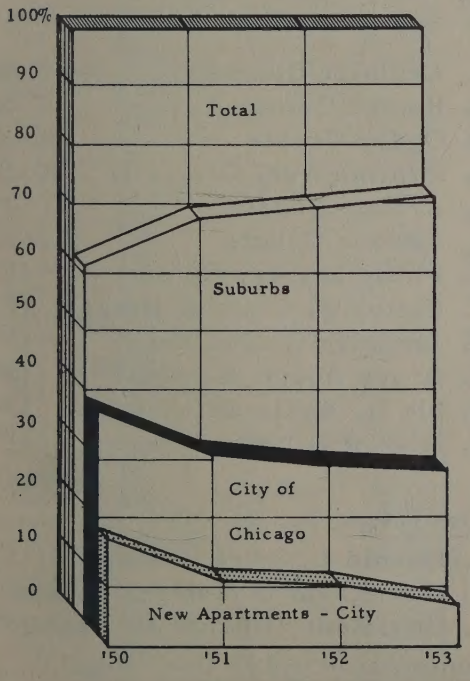
In the first two months of 1954, there is no indication that the situation is improving. In January, 946 new apartment house dwellings were authorized for construction in Chicago, but all except 25 units were in two public housing developments now under construction -- Grace Abbott Homes on the Near West Side and Harold L. Ickes Homes on the Near South Side. In February, city building permits were issued for only 45 new apartment units, compared with 417 in February, 1953, which included 300 public housing units at 44th and Cicero Avenue.

The bulk of all new housing in the Chicago metropolitan area was in single-family detached houses built in the suburbs for sale. Of the 40,000 new dwellings authorized for construction in the area in 1953, only 11,000 were located in Chicago. Even within the city limits, six out of every seven new dwellings were single-family houses built for sale. (Almost no new single-family houses are offered for rent.)

In terms of estimated present population, Chicago's total share of all new dwellings in the metropolitan area in 1953 was equal to 31 units for each 10,000 persons; the suburbs chalked up a rate of 138 -- or more than four times better than Chicago.

Suburban building last year boomed more than 10 percent over the postwar record 1950, but Chicago's total for the last year fell 32 percent below the 1950 mark. In overall construction in the area, Chicago's share has declined steadily since 1950, as shown in the attached chart. Chicago claimed 39 percent of the total area building volume in 1950 and at that time the new construction was equally divided between apartments and detached houses. This ratio dropped to 28 percent in 1953, despite the fact that construction of single-family homes in the city increased substantially over 1952, reflecting the dwindling of rental construction.

DISTRIBUTION OF
NEW RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION
IN CHICAGO AREA - 1950-1953



Source: Office of the Housing and Redevelopment Coordinator

Chicago Housing Authority
608 S. Dearborn St.
Chicago 5, Illinois

today

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CHICAGO, ILL.
Permit No 8625

NEARLY 2,000 VISITORS came to the Open House for Governor Frank O. Lowden Homes on April 4 eager to inspect the new project and its community building and, in many cases, to apply for a home to rent. (See story p. 1)

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Form 3547 Requested

CHICAGO HOUSING AUTHORITY DEVELOPMENTS

COMPLETED - 25 Developments - 11,607 Dwellings

1. Jane Addams Houses	(F)	1,027	14. Leclaire Courts	(C-S)	
2. Julia C. Lathrop Homes	(F)	925	15. Racine Courts	(C-S)	
3. Trumbull Park Homes	(F)	462	16. Ogden Courts	(C-S)	
4. Ida B. Wells Homes	(F)	1,658	17. Prairie Ave. Cts. -I-II	(C-S)	
5. Frances Cabrini Homes	(F)	584	18. Archer Courts	(C-S)	
6. Robert H. Brooks Homes	(F)	834	19. Loomis Courts	(C-S)	
7. Bridgeport Homes	(F)	141	20. Philip Murray Homes	(F)	
8. Lawndale Gardens	(F)	128	21. Victor A. Olander Homes	(F)	
9. Altgeld Gardens	(F)	1,499	22. Leclaire Courts Ext.	(F)	
10. Wentworth Gardens	(F)	422	23. Grace Abbott Homes-I	(F)	
11. Dearborn Homes	(F)	800	24. Ida B. Wells Extension-I	(F)	
12. Maplewood Courts	(C-S)	132	25. Harold L. Ickes Homes-I	(F)	
13. Harrison Courts	(C-S)	126			

UNDER CONSTRUCTION - 6 Developments - 2,640 Dwellings

17. Prairie Ave. Cts. -III	(C-S)	28	25. Harold L. Ickes Homes-I-II	(F)	
23. Grace Abbott Homes-I-II	(F)	1,020	26. Gov. Frank O. Lowden Homes	(F)	
24. Ida B. Wells Extension-II	(F)	195	27. Gov. Henry Horner Homes-I	(F)	

IN DESIGN AND LAND PURCHASE STAGE - 8 Developments - 6,192 Dwellings

17. Prairie Ave. Cts. -IV	(C-S)	8	31. Prairie Ave. Cts. Ext.	(F)	
27. Gov. Henry Horner Homes-II	(F)	325	32. Olander Homes Ext.	(F)	
28. 35th & State	(F)	1,788	33. 43d & Wentworth	(F)	
29. Cabrini Extension	(F)	1,925	34. No Sites Designated	(F)	
30. Madison & Western	(F)	1,169			

VETERANS TEMPORARIES - 9 sites - Demountables and Others (C-F) 1

(F) Financed with federal funds; (C-S) city and state funds; and (C-F) city and federal fund